



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE HEROINE OF LYDENBERG.

AN EPISODE IN THE TRANSVAAL WAR OF 1880-81.

By W. WILMOTT DIXON.



ONE forgets many things in eighteen years; and probably the story which I purpose retelling here is forgotten by all except the surviving actors in it and their immediate friends. But the memory of such a signal instance of British pluck should not be allowed to die.

On Sunday the 5th of December 1880 the little town of Lydenberg, in the Transvaal, was in a state of unwonted excitement. The whole population was out in its Sunday best to give a hearty send off to the 94th Regiment, which had been quartered there for many months, and was now ordered to Pretoria. Both officers and men had made themselves extremely popular with all classes, and the expressions of regret at their departure were universal. Numbers of the inhabitants accompanied the regiment on its way for five or six miles. One lady and gentleman—Lieutenant Walter Long, the junior subaltern of the 94th, and his pretty young wife—rode out as far as fifteen miles. The colonel had paid the lieutenant the high honour of leaving him in sole command of the troops left behind—a responsible position for a youngster of barely two-and-twenty.

As the lieutenant and 'his wife turned their horses' heads and bade farewell to their comrades Colonel Anstruther called out:

'Good-bye, Mrs Long! Look after Long, and mind you're a good little adjutant. Good-bye, Long! Look after my garden for me; remember I expect to find it in as good order as I leave it.'

Both the colonel and the lieutenant were enthusiastic gardeners.

As the regiment tramped past, Mrs Long cried out:

'Good-bye, 94th! God bless you!'

And the men shouted back:

No. 103.—VOL. II.

'Good-bye, *our* lady! God bless you, Mrs Long!'

It was a last farewell for many of them, though they little thought it; for a fortnight later Colonel Anstruther and more than half his men were killed at Bronkhorst Spruit.

Out on the open veldt, about half a mile from the town, were eight military huts, each fifty feet long by eighteen feet wide, built two abreast, with an intervening space of thirty feet, the whole forming a parallelogram seventy-eight yards in length by twenty in breadth. At the first rumour of disaffection among the Boers, Lieutenant Long resolved to withdraw his men into these huts, and throw up some kind of shelter round them, for up to this time they stood without the slightest enclosure, and utterly unprotected. The force under his command consisted of fifty privates and three non-commissioned officers of the 94th, seven privates and a sergeant of the Royal Engineers, three privates and a conductor of the Army Service Corps—in all, including Dr Falvey, of the Army Medical Department, and Lieutenant Long himself, sixty-six officers and men.

Mrs Long, who had been living with her husband in a pretty little cottage embowered in roses and fruit-trees at the lower end of the town, without a moment's hesitation decided to leave her comfortable home and take up her quarters with her husband. Her many friends in Lydenberg tried in vain to dissuade her from the step. She was offered a warm welcome in half-a-dozen houses; but the brave little woman said that her place was beside her husband. So the soldiers brought her belongings from the pretty cottage to one of the huts, and showed their admiration for her pluck by taking the greatest pains in making her quarters as tasteful and comfortable as possible. There was, however, but scant accommodation for a lady in the hut assigned to her, which sheltered

[All Rights Reserved.]

Nov. 18, 1899.

under its roof three horses (whose every movement was distinctly audible) besides herself and her husband.

On the 16th of December they began throwing up works of defence round the huts, and Mrs Long delighted the men by working as hard as any of them. On the 23d of December the appalling news reached them of the massacre of the 94th at Bronkhorst Spruit. But, stunned though they were by the terrible tidings, they set to work more vigorously than ever to complete their defences. When the tiny fort was finished it was christened Fort Mary, in honour of Mrs Long; and Father Walsh, a Roman Catholic priest who had elected to cast in his lot with the little garrison, formally blessed it.

An envoy from the Boers, Dietrick Müller, appeared, on the 27th of December, with a proposal that the garrison should surrender and accept a safe-conduct into Natal. His surprise at the youthful appearance of the commandant of the fort was great. 'Dat younker!' he exclaimed in contempt. But 'dat younker' was not so green as Mr Müller imagined. He suggested writing to Pretoria for instructions. Müller consented, and Lieutenant Long thus cleverly gained a delay of five days, which he utilised in very materially strengthening his defences.

On the 4th of January the Boers appeared in force, some seven hundred of them, and formally demanded surrender of the fort; to which summons the young subaltern returned the spirited reply: 'It is inconsistent with my duty as a soldier to surrender my trust.' An urgent appeal was once more made by Mrs Long's friends in the town to induce her to quit the fort and take up her residence in one of the many homes placed at her disposal. But she stoutly refused.

Two days afterwards the attack commenced. For three hours and a half seven hundred Boers kept up a continuous rifle-fire upon the little fort at a range of five hundred yards. In her own charmingly modest and simple narrative, Mrs Long thus describes her feelings when she first found herself under fire:

'I must humbly confess that during the first hour of the firing I was dreadfully frightened, and took refuge under a table, for its imaginary shelter. Father Walsh, entering the hut at that moment, with his breviary in his hand, to look for me, and not finding me, as he expected, called me. I lifted the tablecover and popped my head out, saying, "Here I am, Father!" My position struck me as so ludicrous that I burst into a hearty fit of laughter. Not till 4 p.m. was I able to ascertain that, notwithstanding the terrible fire of the last four hours, not a man had been wounded. My husband, knowing how anxious I should be as to his safety, looked in as often as he could to cheer me.'

But she very soon overcame these natural terrors, and got so used to the firing, even when the Boers

brought a couple of cannon to bear on the fort, that she frequently slept right through the cannonade.

What with tending the sick and wounded, and making sandbags, sometimes turning out as many as four dozen of them in a day, Mrs Long's time was fully occupied. Think of her there, one woman, little more than a girl, alone among sixty men fighting for their lives against ten times their number! What wonder that the men fought like heroes with this daintily-bred English lady sharing all their dangers and setting them an example of patience and courage and cheerfulness. She admitted that at first she felt the absence of any of her own sex keenly. But the soldiers were so devoted to her, so delicate in their solicitude and consideration for her, that she soon lost the sense of loneliness.

One day a strange messenger arrived, a little black-and-tan terrier, with a piece of paper folded in a rag tied round its neck. It was a communication from some friendly townsfolk informing them that the Boers were quarrelling among themselves, furious with Dietrick Müller for being such a fool as to allow the English those five days to complete their defences; and adding, as a hint, that the defenders of the fort were firing too high—which hint, I need hardly say, was quickly taken.

The garrison had nothing in the shape of a gun with which to meet the fire of the two six-pounders that the Boers had in position. But one day Mrs Long suggested to one of the Army Service men that the 'monkey' of an Abyssinian punp which they had might perhaps be utilised. The idea was promptly seized upon and ingeniously carried into execution; and the Boers were very much amazed when a cylindrical shot weighing two pounds six ounces, formed of round crowbar iron cased in lead, came crashing in amongst them. 'Mrs Long's gun,' as it was christened, proved a very valuable addition to the armament of Fort Mary.

The huts were riddled through and through with round-shot and rifle-bullets, and the escapes from death were so miraculous that Lieutenant Long twice had the men assembled for a special thanksgiving service conducted by Father Walsh. On one occasion a cannon-shot struck the wall within an inch of Mrs Long's head and covered her with dust and débris.

Another time the hut in which she lived came down about her ears, and her escape from being crushed in the ruins was marvellous. But she must needs, woman-like, go back to rescue her 'things,' and expressed truly feminine sorrow to find her best bonnet smashed as flat as a pancake, and only one cup, two saucers, and a couple of plates left of all her cherished crockery.

Meanwhile the men kept up their spirits with music and dancing. 'Hold the Fort,' with a strictly local application, was a favourite chorus,

and the men invented a version of the famous Jingo song :

We don't want to fight; but, by Jingo ! if we do,
We've got the pluck, we've got the men, and ammunition too.

We've fought the Zulu king and Sekekuni too,
And the Boers shall never get into Fort Mary.

And they never did, though they tried their utmost to drive out the gallant defenders with cannon and rifles, and, what was worse, 'Greek-fire' shot in metallic tubes into the thatch of the roofs. Perhaps if the Boers could only have summoned up courage to make a determined assault whilst the huts were blazing and half the garrison occupied in putting out the flames, they might have captured the fort. But the Boers are not dashing fighters, and they did not care to meet the stubborn defenders of Fort Mary hand to hand. So they contented themselves with potting at the gallant fellows who fearlessly exposed themselves in their efforts to extinguish the fire. Those efforts were successful, though they cost the lives of two brave men who could ill be spared.

But the garrison were not content with standing only on the defensive. They made plucky little night-sorties, which scared the Boers considerably and caused them some loss. Twice Conductor Parsons of the Army Service Corps sallied out alone in the dark, and pitched hand-grenades in amongst the enemy, which produced a perfect panic amongst them. There was vigorous sapping and mining, too, on the part of the Royal Engineers, who made things very lively for the besiegers.

Then the water ran short. A pint a day for each man was all that could be spared ; and this, though supplemented with a pint bottle of ale from the stores, was terribly short rations of drink in the hottest month of an African summer. Plucky Mrs Long found the privation of water for washing more trying than even the thirst ; and her joy was intense when, after many days of this privation, she discovered a big bath-sponge in its oil-cloth case still damp. One daily wipe she and her husband allowed themselves as a luxury, and then locked the sponge up. At last the rain, which for many weary hours they had watched deluging the hills around, condescended to visit them, and then they had rather more water than they wanted ; for, the huts being all roofless since the fire, there was no shelter from the pitiless down-pour. The soldiers, always eager and anxious to protect Mrs Long, rigged up a tarpaulin screen to shield her from the rain when sleeping ; but, despite their care, she often woke up drenched.

The news of the disasters at Laing's Nek and Majuba Hill was, of course, promptly communicated to them by the enemy, accompanied by a

peremptory summons to surrender. But Lieutenant Long, though badly wounded himself, lying helpless, with his faithful wife nursing him night and day, sent back the curt answer, 'I shall hold out to the last.' And the men, looking at that brave woman so patient and cheerful under her terrible load of anxiety, set their teeth hard and swore the Boers should never have Fort Mary whilst there was a man left to handle a rifle.

'And ever on the topmost roof the old banner of England blew.' At first, indeed, it was but a merchant-ship's ensign. How they hoisted a real Union-jack I will let Mrs Long tell in her own words :

'Our ship's ensign had become, what with the wind and what with the bullets, a perfect shred ; moreover, we were anxious to hoist a *real* Union-jack. A Geneva flag was discovered, but though sufficient red and white were forthcoming to complete the crosses, no blue was to be found. Nothing daunted, the men came to me to inquire if I possessed such a thing as a bit of dark blue for the new flag, and, to their delight, I gave them a serge dress of the desired colour. A beautiful Union-jack was very soon made and hoisted, instead of the first. Our ship's ensign, though exchanged, was not discarded, for under its tattered shred our brave fellows were carried to their graves.'

On the 29th of March the Boers kept up a furious cannonade and fusillade all night. But the next morning, to the surprise of the garrison, a white flag was hoisted over the enemy's lines, and under its protection Lieutenant Baker of the 60th Rifles brought them the humiliating news that peace had been concluded with the Boers. So the gallant defenders marched out from the riddled and battered little fort which for eighty-four days they had held against ten times their number.

Mrs Long was so thin and pulled down that her friends in Lydenberg hardly knew her. The Boers cheered her heartily as she passed them on her way into the town, and their commander, Piet Steyne, treated her with the utmost courtesy. Indeed, such a chivalrous gentleman was this gallant Boer that he sentenced one of his men to twenty-five lashes for shouting out during the siege, 'Come out, Mrs Long, and make us some coffee ; we are so cold.' At the same time he threatened double the penalty if any further insult were offered to the English lady.

Lieutenant Long and his men were publicly complimented in a General Order 'for their successful and heroic defence.' But I am disposed to think that the largest share of the praise was due to the brave woman who set them so noble an example.



COUNT PAUL.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.



T this moment there was the sound of a footstep in the passage outside. Cumberlege hastily crossed to the door and threw it open. He found himself confronted on the threshold by Karamoff.

'What now, monsieur?' he began angrily.

Karamoff stopped him with a gesture.

'Don't be a fool, sir,' said he; 'and speak lower. I come to warn you. The members of the council are getting impatient; they exhibit signs of discontent, even rebellion, at their exclusion from the council chamber. It is possible, if time is allowed them for reflection, they may even begin to suspect'—

'What you know!' said Cumberlege grimly.

'Well, monsieur, I intend to save the lady—councillors or no councillors.'

'And I desire to assist you. That's why I offered to bring the chairman's message. It is this: he begs, with all proper respect, to request you to readmit them in five minutes, as time presses. You can read the message as you like. There is also another reason for haste. Count Paul may arrive!'

'Do you think it likely that he will?'

'Not now; but he *might*; and then'—

Karamoff shrugged his shoulders significantly. 'My opinion is that he missed the Calais boat, or else has got lost in the fog. Now, Monsieur *Comment l'appelle-t-on*, let me advise you. Get mademoiselle out of this house if possible in half-an-hour, and conduct her with her woman attendant ostensibly to the Hotel Cecil; that is where the Count stays, remember—the Hotel Cecil. A carriage will await you in the street. This done, lose not an instant in transferring her, if you can, to an unknown address, whither the Borastrians cannot trace her, and as speedily as may be smuggling her out of London. Can you do this, monsieur?'

Cumberlege nodded.

'I *will* do it!' he answered.

'You have your plan?' asked Karamoff hurriedly.

'I have, sir.'

'Rely upon me to second you. *À voir*. Five minutes only. Be wary; exhibit neither undue anxiety nor excitement in your demeanour. Our councillors are shrewd fellows;' and with a smile Karamoff closed the door and vanished.

Cumberlege instantly returned to the side of Mdle. Naritzka, whose pale face and agitated manner sufficiently betrayed the emotion under which her gentle spirit was labouring.

'Mademoiselle,' said Cumberlege, 'as you value your life, I entreat you to be plain with me.

You must pardon what may appear in me a blunt impertinence. Mademoiselle, if Count Paul Rassovitch were here, and if Count Paul Rassovitch, standing before you thus, said, "Mademoiselle, I love you!" what would you reply?'

'I should reply, monsieur,' responded Mdle. Naritzka, with the prettiest of blushes, 'that I felt honoured by the Count's declaration—no more.'

'No more! Then, mademoiselle, supposing again that the Count should say, "Mademoiselle, you have it in your power to confer upon me the greatest happiness of my life. With all humility I now offer you my name, my heart, and my fortune," what then would you reply?'

'If it were the Count, monsieur—if it were Count Paul Rassovitch who spoke thus, I should reject his offer,' she answered slowly.

'Ah! Is your heart, then, already engaged, mademoiselle?'

'If you have a purpose in the question, monsieur, I will answer it.'

'Believe me, I have a purpose.'

'No, monsieur,' replied Mdle. Naritzka in hesitating accents.

Cumberlege felt his heart throb strangely.

'Then, mademoiselle, hear me. It is as the betrothed wife of Count Paul that you must escape from the hands of these conspirators. As Count Paul I shall declare to them that you are my affianced bride. Do you follow me, mademoiselle? As Count Paul!'

She bowed her head.

'As Count Paul,' she murmured.

'I shall conduct you, with your woman attendant. Can you trust her?'

'She is faithful to me. Yes.'

'I shall conduct you, then, with her to the Hotel Cecil; presumably to the Hotel Cecil. After that I shall not leave you, mademoiselle, till you are in a place of safety. Then, mademoiselle, no longer as Count Paul, but as a plain and honest English gentleman, you will permit me to lay at your feet a heart that has learnt in the brief space of one hour to love and honour you, and a devotion that asks for its reward no more than a perpetual opportunity of serving you to the end of life? Nay; do not reject them now! Leave me yet an hour or two in which to cheat myself with hopes'—

'Monsieur!' broke in Mdle. Naritzka, 'how am I to thank you for your brave and disinterested service? As Count Paul!'

'Ay, as Count Paul. Thank me as Count Paul,' interrupted Cumberlege hastily.

'No. I was going to add'— She faltered, hesitated.

Cumberlege seized her hand suddenly and looked into her eyes that drooped beneath his gaze.

'I love you!' he exclaimed hotly. 'I love you; and I will know my answer now! I cannot wait an hour—an instant longer!' Then as suddenly he dropped her hand and bit his lip. 'Forgive me, mademoiselle!' he added. 'It seems as though I would take advantage of your helpless position. Forget the words. Think of me merely as one who plays a part—as, in fact, Count Paul, whom you would not marry!'

'Nay, but as the gentleman who has risked his life to save 'me,' she murmured; 'not as Count Paul. Perhaps, monsieur, a maiden may be permitted to express her—her gratitude,' she ended shyly.

There was a noise of approaching footsteps and voices nearing the apartment. Mdle. Naritzka started and turned pale. Again Cumberlege seized her hand and pressed it to his lips.

'Courage,' said he. 'All will be well. One word only, mademoiselle. Zourakoff—there was no ground for that villain's lying assertion—Prince Zourakoff is nothing to you?'

'Nothing!' exclaimed the young lady, flushing. 'Nothing, monsieur!'

'And, mademoiselle, may I hope?'

Cumberlege could only read his answer in the soft blue eyes that looked meltingly into his own, for whatever words were on Mdle. Naritzka's lips were roughly interrupted by a sudden sharp knock at the door.

'Courage!' he repeated, and turned rapidly to answer the summons. Mdle. Naritzka sank back into a chair at the farther end of the room. The door opened, and the chairman entered, followed by the councillors.

'I trust, Monsieur le Comte,' said he, 'that we do not disturb you too soon'—he glanced from Cumberlege to the form of the girl cowering in the chair, with a curious expression—'but, as you are aware, each minute is of importance. We desire to terminate the proceedings as soon as possible.'

'Be seated, sir,' said Cumberlege haughtily; 'and you, too, ladies and gentlemen.'

Again the councillors took their places at the table, and Cumberlege proceeded to the head of it. There was a moment's silence; then when each person had settled down in his place he rose to address them.

'Members of the Inner Council,' he began in slow and deliberate tones, 'I am conscious of a great weight of responsibility in the position which I occupy as the Head of our Order. The traditions and principles of that Order are, I need hardly remind you, matters of the deepest import to me. Least of all should I be the one to interfere with the operation of those principles, or seek to divert the course of justice as it is laid down by our laws. In the present case a lady stands before

you charged with a crime against the secret society—a crime, I grant you, for which there would appear to be no palliation and but one punishment. But, fellow-members, there is something connected with this particular crime which at once removes it from the category of unpardonable offences; that something is of a nature so private that I alone am in possession of the knowledge of it. It is impossible for me to make public my information, nor can I tell you how in the first instance I gained it. Aware of the existence of this circumstance, I desired to interrogate Mademoiselle Naritzka privately. The result of that interrogation serves only to confirm what I knew before. Councillors, this lady is no traitress!'

Cumberlege cast a quick, scornful glance round the assembly as he uttered these words. They were greeted by a murmur of astonishment; some of the members looked relieved, others perplexed, and a few evinced signs of anger and distrust—among them Ivan and the chairman.

'Monsieur le Comte,' exclaimed the latter, 'can you not furnish to the council some proof?'

'No, sir,' said Cumberlege coldly. 'I can furnish you no proof. I would not if I could. My word is sufficient; let any dispute it who dare.'

'The Count is right,' cried Karamoff. 'The word of the Head of our Order is law. There is no appeal from the Count's decision.'

'That is so,' grumbled Ivan. 'But surely even the Count is aware that a convicted prisoner'—

'Silence, sir!' thundered Cumberlege in very real anger.

'Rome must come before Caesar, Monsieur le Comte!' exclaimed the chairman, raising his voice, threateningly, in turn.

This remark seemed to be the signal for a general clamour of protest. Voices were raised on all sides. There appeared to be every indication of a growing uproar. In the temporary hubbub that ensued, and during which Cumberlege stood confronting the assembly with flashing eyes, while Mdle. Naritzka shrank trembling behind the form of her attendant, Karamoff took occasion to lean forward hurriedly.

'Don't lose your head!' he whispered in English. 'Your plan—it is the only chance now. Be firm and cool. The carriage waits. Remember the Hotel Cecil. Say you will marry her!'

It seemed as though the crafty foreigner had contrived to read Cumberlege's very thoughts, so easily and correctly did he appear to have divined his project and motives.

'Yes, yes,' whispered back Cumberlege; 'that is my plan.' Then in a loud voice he cried:

'Fellow-councillors! Listen.'

Immediately there came a lull; every voice once more was hushed, every eye directed to the figure of the speaker.

'You have said, sir,' proceeded Cumberlege, addressing the chairman, 'that "Rome must come

before Caesar." The sentiment gains in truth what it lacks in courtesy; and, let me add, it is entirely in accord with my own principles. The laws of the Inner Council shall ever be respected by its Head. I am here neither to discredit nor to violate them. I will, first, repeat what I have already told you: this lady is not a traitress. I have certain knowledge of that fact, but I cannot divulge my information. It is immaterial to me whether you believe my word or not; for it is now on other and more legitimate grounds that I pronounce her instant release. It is well known to you all that by the laws of the Order there is one case in which a member, even if she offend to the last degree, can claim exemption from the penalties of her offence; and that is, if the member be the wife of the Head of the Order. Now, fellow-councillors, although Mademoiselle Naritzka is *not* guilty of the crime of which you accuse her, without stooping to exonerate herself from the unjust charge preferred against her, she is yet able to plead this special prerogative to which I have alluded, and which guarantees her absolute immunity from the consequences of any act she may have committed. Members of the Inner Council, I here declare to you that Mademoiselle Naritzka is my affianced wife.'

He paused, and there came again a loud murmur of astonishment from his hearers at the concluding words of his speech. The chairman started up.

'If this is so, Monsieur le Comte,' he exclaimed, 'why were we not informed of it earlier, and spared the trouble of these proceedings?'

'The matter, monsieur,' replied Cumberlege sternly, 'was only settled definitely between Mademoiselle Naritzka and myself ten minutes ago: that is why. Have you anything else to say?'

The chairman shrugged his shoulders.

'The laws of the Order must be respected. You are within your rights, Count,' he answered sullenly. Then he turned to Mdlle. Naritzka.

'Mademoiselle,' said he, 'you are free;' and, 'mademoiselle,' he added, with a curious smile, 'I congratulate you.'

Cumberlege crossed over to the side of the blushing young lady and took her hand in his.

'My countess!' said he, and raised it to his lips.

The members of the assembly received this as the public acknowledgment of the Count's betrothal, and a sudden quick change came over the temper of the company; with one accord they all rose to their feet, and a simultaneous cry burst from their lips of 'The Countess!' In that instant they seemed to have forgotten their recent attitude towards the lovely maiden and their relative positions, remembering only that no longer a culprit, but the chosen and honoured wife of the Head of their Order, stood before them.

'Now, sir,' muttered Karamoff in Cumberlege's ear—'now is the time! The carriage waits!'

Cumberlege needed not to be reminded of the danger of unnecessary delay; while yet the buzz of congratulatory exclamations was in the air, he turned to the woman attendant and bade her instantly repair with mademoiselle's hand-luggage to the hall door, and there await them. Then he addressed himself with a smile to the councillors; all trace of his recent anger and excitement had vanished from his countenance, and it was in a friendly and ingratiating voice that he spoke.

'Yes, my friends,' he said, 'the Countess! And as such let this lady be ever honoured by you as she is honoured by me, and as she deserves to be honoured by all the world—for God never made a truer or a nobler woman! He who disputes this will have to reckon with Count Paul! It is not, you see, in vain,' he added, 'that you summoned me here to-night! If the *dénouement* has proved an unexpected one to you, at any rate allow me to hope that it has proved not a disappointing one. There is an English proverb that says, "All's well that ends well;" and it is Mademoiselle Naritzka's wish that I should convey to you her pardon for the somewhat ungallant treatment she has received at your hands this evening. She is a lady incapable of bearing ill-will even to her enemies; but she needs not your assurance to convince her that among the members of our Order at least, from this moment, she may number only friends.'

Karamoff started to his feet.

'Friends!' he cried. 'Friends all to Mademoiselle Naritzka! Long live the Countess Rassovitch!'

The cry was instantly echoed throughout the room: where frowns had been an hour ago were to be seen now only smiles; those who had been ready to condemn were equally ready to applaud; the tide of fortune had turned. Meantime the beautiful recipient of these favours appeared to be as embarrassed by the attentions of her well-wishers as she had been previously dejected by the hostility of her judges. She scarce knew where to direct her eyes so as to escape the admiring glances which were cast upon her from every side. Cumberlege was quick to perceive her distress, and quicker to relieve it. With a simple courtesy he offered her his arm, and, half-shielding her from the scrutiny of the company, indicated with a gesture his desire to conduct her from the room.

'Monsieur,' he said, turning to Karamoff, 'my carriage should be waiting?'

'It is, Monsieur le Comte,' replied Karamoff, bowing.

'Then, my friends,' he continued, addressing the councillors, 'I will detain you here no longer. I find the Hotel Cecil a more comfortable haven than our council chamber; and mademoiselle, you will understand, is fatigued and overwrought'—

'Permit me, Monsieur le Comte—and mademoiselle,' broke in the chairman, 'to express the assurance of every one here that in future it will be our endeavour to erase from the minds of yourself and mademoiselle all recollection of the unfortunate incidents of this evening by the devotion which it will be our chief care to display in the service of Madame la Comtesse!'

Loud acclamations of assent greeted the chairman's words, and, bowing his acknowledgments, Cumberlege, with Mdlle. Naritzka's tiny hand resting on his arm, made a step towards the door. It was immediately thrown open by one of the councillors, who, bowing low, held it for the two of them to pass through. The rest of the company rose and stood in respectful silence. Karamoff, beckoning to Bergstein, prepared to follow the gentleman and lady. Once on the landing, he touched Cumberlege's arm.

'Lose not an instant!' he whispered; then aloud: 'I will precede you and see that the carriage is ready, Monsieur le Comte.'

Cumberlege and Mdlle. Naritzka stood aside to let Karamoff and Bergstein pass; then they descended the stairs close on their heels, and in the hall below found mademoiselle's waiting-woman equipped and ready. The front door was unbarred by the porter, and in the street outside a brougham stood waiting, wrapped in the mist.

'That is the carriage,' said Karamoff in an undertone. 'The driver was hired by me; he does not know the Count by sight. Give him what orders you will; but first, remember, the Hotel Cecil!' and he glanced significantly towards Bergstein, who had advanced to open the brougham door.

'I thank you for your co-operation, Monsieur Karamoff,' whispered back Cumberlege.

'It is for the sake of mademoiselle,' he answered hurriedly. 'I knew her as a child—and—but no matter, monsieur. God speed you both; and one day we may meet again! Adieu! Adieu, mademoiselle!'

'Adieu—my old friend!' murmured Mdlle. Naritzka, and the next moment she was hurried into the carriage by Cumberlege, for it was now no time for ceremony.

The fog had lifted, but was yet thick; and this circumstance perhaps favoured the fugitives, for it protected them from the comments of any passing policeman whose suspicions might have been aroused by this midnight exodus from a silent house. The woman attendant was directed

by Cumberlege to take her place in the brougham, and then he himself entered it and sat down by the side of Mdlle. Naritzka, while Bergstein closed the door.

'Inform the councillors, sir,' said Cumberlege to him, 'that I will communicate with them—shortly; and oblige me by telling the coachman to drive with all speed to the Hotel Cecil.'

Bergstein bowed, Karamoff waved his hand, the order was given, and the carriage with its three occupants drove swiftly off into the still night. For some moments none of the three spoke. Mdlle. Naritzka cowered back in the cushions; Cumberlege sat erect, his brows knit into anxious thought; and the woman opposite appeared to be sleeping. Presently Cumberlege roused himself from his reflections with the gesture of one who has arrived at a definite conclusion, and his face wore a sudden smile as he bent down close to Mdlle. Naritzka's ear.

'Mademoiselle!' he whispered.

The young lady gave a little involuntary shiver, it may have been of maiden apprehension, it may have been of joy—or perhaps a little of both.

'Monsieur,' she replied softly, and seemed to shrink still farther back in her corner.

'Mademoiselle,' repeated Cumberlege in a low tone, 'I think you are now safe. I have only to await your orders. Am I to drive you to the Hotel Cecil, or?'—He paused eloquently, and in the gloom of the carriage his eyes sought out hers. She felt his gaze upon her and trembled, but not with fear.

'Do what you will!' she murmured below her breath.

He bent still lower.

'My answer—now!' he whispered passionately.

'Your answer, monsieur?'

'For an hour we have acted, but this—this is reality! Not for an hour, but for life, mademoiselle!'

In the darkness a little hand stole out; yet, though it was dark, it was not so dark but that it found itself instantly enclosed in the strong grasp of another and pressed to burning lips. Thus Cumberlege got his answer. A moment later the serving-woman was awakened from her slumber by hearing some one say laughingly:

'Then we will not drive to the Hotel Cecil after all!'

And she was under the impression that it was Count Paul who spoke.



A LADY OF QUALITY IN THE OLDEN TIME.



THE luxury which prevailed at the Court of Queen Elizabeth and her successor, James I., is apt to be underestimated in these days. The notion is prevalent that the state maintained by the ladies of quality in the time of the last Tudor Queen was of a very sordid kind, and it is generally supposed that lavish outlay on dress and appointments only took place on special occasions. The following letter shows what a baroness of the period thought was due to her rank. The document speaks for itself; but a few notes will make the references to personages intelligible.

Sir John Spencer, Knight, was Lord Mayor of London in 1594, and was reckoned one of the wealthiest men of his time. His only daughter and heiress was Eliza Spencer, the writer of the letter. She married William, second Baron Compton, who was created Earl of Northampton in 1618, and was ancestor of the present Marquis of Northampton. The Lord Mayor was colloquially known as 'the rich Spencer' to distinguish him from his relative Sir John Spencer of Althorp, whose daughter, Anne, was the stepmother of Lord Compton, and was afterwards married to the Earl of Dorset. Eliza Spencer brought a large fortune to her husband; much of the land around the Charterhouse belonged to her, and Compton Street and Northampton Street in that quarter preserve her titles.

It will be seen from her letter that she expected a full return for her dowry. The letter is not dated, but from internal evidence it must have been written between 1597 and 1611. The allusion to the Lord Chamberlain is obscure. The writer evidently means Thomas Lord Howard of Walden, afterwards Earl of Suffolk, whose son, Theophilus, bore the title of Lord Walden during his father's lifetime. Lord Howard was not Lord Chamberlain but Lord High Treasurer. The reason of Lady Compton's animosity is explained by an entry in the manuscript 'Memorable Accidents,' written by the famous Parliamentary leader, John Pym, and now preserved among the manuscripts of Mr Philip Pleydell Bouverie: 'A.D. 1611. . . . Sir John Spencer the Alderman died. My Lord Compton havinge maryed his only daughter, oppressed with the greatnes of his sudaine fortunes fell madde. The Erle of Suffolke, havinge begd the keeping of him, would have seized upon his money and jewelless at Islington; my Lord Compton's [step-mother the Countesse of Dorset, playinge the valiant virago, withstood him, and he was thereby defeated; my Lord Compton, being kept in the Towre a little while, recovered.'

It is certain that Lord Compton could not upbraid his wife with extravagance, for he was himself a notable spendthrift. John Pym says further: 'I was credibly informed by his steward, Mr P., that my Lorde Compton at the first comminge to his great estate after the death of Sir John Spencer, did within lesse than 8 weekes spende £72,000, most in great horses, rich saddles, and playe.' It is stated that 'on 21st April 1628, the Earl [of Northampton] rode to his installation as Knight of the Garter from Salisbury House, in the Strand, to Windsor Castle, with such splendour and gallantry, and exhibited so brilliant a cortège, being attended by nearly one hundred persons, that a vote of thanks was decreed to him by the Chapter of the Order.' He died on 24th June 1630. These notes will enable the reader to understand this remarkable letter:

'MY SWEETE LIFE,—Now I have declared to you my mind for the settling of your state, I suppose that it were best for me to bethinke or consider with myself what allowance were meetest for me. For, considering what care I have had of your estate, and how respectfully I dealt with those, which both by the laws of God, nature, and of civil polity, wit, religion, governm^t, and honesty, you, my dear, are bound to, pray and beseech you to grant me £1600 per annum, quarterly to be paid. Also I would (besides that allowance for my apparell) have £600 added yearly (quarterly to be paid) for the performance of charitable works; and those things I would not, neither will be, accountable for.

'Also I will have three horses for my own saddle, that none shall dare to lend or borrow; none lend but I, none borrow but you. Also I would have two gentlewomen, lest one should be sick or have some other lett, also believe that it is an undecent thing for a gentlewoman to stand mumping alone, when God hath blessed their Lord and Lady with a good estate. Also when I ride ahunting or hawking, or travel from one house to another, I will have them attending; so for either of these said women I must and will have for either of them a horse.

'Also I will have six or eight gentlemen; and I will have my two coaches, one lined with velvet, to myself, with four very fair horses; and a coach for my women, lined with sweet cloth, one laced with gold, the other with scarlet, and laced with matched lace and silver, with four good horses. Also I will have two coachmen, one for my own coach, the other for my women. Also at any time when I travel, I will be allowed not only carroches [carts] and spare

horses for me and my women; but I will have such carriages as shall be fitting for all, orderly; not pestering my things with my women's, nor theirs with chamber-maids, nor theirs with wash-maids. Also for laundresses, when I travel, I will have them sent away before, with the carriages, to see all safe; and the chamber-maids I will have go before, with the greens [rushes for the floors] that the chambers may be ready sweet and clean.

'Also, for that it is undecent to crowd up myself with my gentleman usher in my coach, I will have him to have a convenient horse to attend me, either in city or country. And I must have two footmen. And my desire is that you defray all the charges for me. And for myself, besides my yearly allowance, I would have twenty gowns of apparell; six of them excellent good ones, eight of them for the country, and six others of them *very* excellent good ones. Also I would have, to put in my purse, £2000 and £200; and so for you to pay my debts. Also I would have £6000 to buy me jewels, and £4000 to buy me a pearl chain.

'Now, seeing I am so reasonable unto you, I pray you to find my children apparell and their schooling; and also my servants (men and women) their wages. Also I will have my houses furnished, and all my lodging chambers to be suited with all such furniture as is fit; as beds, stools, chairs, suitable cushions, carpets, silver warming-pans, cupboards of plate, fair hangings, and such like; so for my drawing-chambers in all houses, I will have them delicately furnished, both with

hangings, couch, canopy, glass, carpet, chairs, cushions, and all things thereunto belonging.

'Also my desire is that you would pay all my debts, build Ashby House, and purchase lands; and lend no money (as you love God) to the Lord Chamberlain, who would have all; perhaps your life from you. Remember his son, Lord Walden, what entertainment he gave when you were at the Tilt-yard. If you were dead, he said he would be a husband, a father, a brother, and he said he would marry me. I protest I grieve to see the poor man have so little wit and honesty, to use his friend so vilely. Also he fed me with untruths concerning the Charter-house; but that is the least; he wished me much harm; you know him. God keep you and me from such as he is.

'So now that I have declared to you what I would have, and what that is that I would not have, I pray that when you be an Earl, to allow me £1000 more than I now desire, and double attendance.—Your loving Wife,

ELIZA COMPTON.'

The children of the marriage of Lord Compton and Eliza Spencer were one son and two daughters. The son, Spencer Compton, second Earl of Northampton, was a distinguished Cavalier, and fell at the battle of Hopton Heath in 1642. One daughter was married to Robert Earl of Nithsdale, and another to the first Marquis of Clanricarde. Ashby House, referred to in the letter, is now Castle Ashby, one of the seats of the present Marquis of Northampton.

SOME HISTORIC DIAMONDS.



THE diamond, for a long time considered the most precious of gems, has been known from early antiquity; but, acknowledged as it is on all hands to be supreme in beauty, the manner of its production remains to this day one of the secrets of Nature's laboratory.

Unquestionably, brilliant objects have ever proved wonderfully fascinating to men, and when we reflect on this instinctive taste we cannot be surprised at their fondness for the diamond. But it is to the cutter we are indebted for the revelation of its loveliness and the development of that radiance which distinguishes it from all other gems. In early times the diamond was worn *rough* or polished only on its upper surface, and it was in this form it was used to decorate temples, goblets, crowns, &c. These stones, called *naifes*, are still infinitely preferred to any others by the natives of India. Any one who may have seen some of the presents received by the Prince

of Wales in the course of his Indian tour will recall to mind how many of the jewels were in an uncut state, and realise what a very different appearance diamonds present when so set from what they do when forming part of some dazzlingly beautiful and glittering ornament such as is worn by ladies of our own time.

Diamonds are of varied hues, and, according to an old writer, 'seem to take pleasure in assuming in turn the colours proper to other gems;' but those considered the most perfect and most esteemed are colourless like water. One of the finest of coloured specimens in Europe is the famous blue 'Hope' diamond. The King of Saxony possesses a magnificent green one, which forms the button of his state hat. But the most perfect collection of coloured diamonds is in the museum at Vienna, and is in the form of a bouquet, the different flowers being composed of diamonds the same colour as the blooms they represent. These stones were collected by one Virgil von Helmreich, a Tyrolese, who had

passed many years in Brazil among the diamond-mines.

From the earliest moment of its discovery it would appear as if the diamond quickened the wits of its possessor and awakened a thirst for gain. Even the poor slaves who worked in the mines occasionally managed to elude the keen vigilance of the overseer, for we are told by Tavernier how, when he was making a tour through the Indian diamond-mines, he saw one poor creature conceal a stone of considerable size by forcing it into the corner of one of his eyes in such a way as to effectually hide it.

Although diamonds have played an important part in modern history, we do not hear of any in ancient times of special note, with the exception of that of Nerva, which he presented to Trajan on recognising him as his colleague, and which the latter afterwards gave to Hadrian as a reward for his services in the Dacian war, thus tacitly appointing him his successor. Diamonds of large size have always been exceedingly rare; and it is from Asia, the cradle of luxury and wealth, that most of those stones which have become famous have been derived.

The crown of England is extremely rich in beautiful diamonds; but the 'Koh-i-nûr,' or 'Mountain of Light,' takes the highest rank as its principal treasure. This wonderful stone, said to have been discovered in the Godavery River five thousand years ago, was the talisman of India for many centuries, and, according to Hindu legend, was worn by Karna, one of the heroes in the 'great war' which forms the subject of the epic poem *Mahabharata*. There is little doubt that it is the same diamond mentioned by the Sultan Baber as having belonged to Ala-ed-din, who ruled over a portion of Hindustan from 1288 to 1301; and it is very generally believed that the 'Koh-i-nûr' was amongst the jewels shown to Tavernier by Aurungzebe in 1665.

After many vicissitudes the 'Koh-i-nûr' found its way into the Lahore treasury, where it remained until the annexation of the Punjab by the British Government in 1849, when it was taken possession of by the civil authorities under the condition that all State property should be confiscated by the East India Company, and that the 'Koh-i-nûr' should be presented to the Queen. It was sent by Lord Dalhousie to England in the charge of two officers, and presented, as stipulated, to the Queen on the 3d of June 1850, and exhibited in the first great Exhibition the following year. Its weight was 186 $\frac{1}{2}$ carats, but it did not then present its now brilliant appearance. It had been badly cut by the natives in India; and the late Prince Consort, who took great interest in the gem, after due consultation, and acting on the advice of Sir David Brewster, decided that it should be recut. This was accordingly done, at a cost of £8000, the operation being completed

in thirty-eight days; but the result was not entirely satisfactory, Prince Albert openly expressing his disappointment.

The 'Koh-i-nûr' now weighs 106 $\frac{1}{2}$ carats, having lost eighty carats in the recutting. It is preserved in Windsor Castle, a model of the stone being kept with the regalia in the jewel-room of the Tower, and is valued at £140,000. It is neither the most brilliant nor yet the largest diamond in existence, but the most interesting because of its connection with our own Royal House, and on account of the romantic incidents associated with it.

The 'Braganza,' in the possession of the King of Portugal, is unquestionably the largest diamond of which there is any record. Grave doubts are, however, entertained as to whether the stone is really a diamond or only a white topaz. As it is still in an uncut state, and is jealously guarded in the Portuguese treasury, no one being permitted to examine it, there has never been an opportunity of arriving at a definite conclusion. It weighs 1680 carats, is said to be the size of a hen's egg, and, 'according to the method of calculation by Jeffries,' its value will be, in its present form, £5,644,800. Murray tells us that 'Don John VI. had a hole drilled in it, and wore it round his neck on gala days.'

The discovery of this diamond is generally fixed about the year 1798, and there is a most interesting account of it in Mawe's *Travels in Brazil*, which we cannot do better than give in his own words: 'Three men (elsewhere named Antonio de Sousa, José Felix Gomez, and Thomas de Sousa), having been found guilty of high crimes, were banished into the interior, and ordered not to approach any of the capital towns, or to remain in civilised society, on pain of perpetual imprisonment. Driven by this hard sentence into the most unfrequented part of the country, they endeavoured to explore new mines or new productions, in the hope that, sooner or later, they might have the good fortune to make some important discovery which would obtain a reversal of their own sentence, and enable them to regain their station in society. They wandered about in this neighbourhood, making frequent searches in its various mines, for more than six years. At length they by hazard made some trials in the river Abaité, at a time when its waters were so low that a part of its bed was left exposed. Here, while searching and washing for gold, they had the good fortune to find a diamond nearly an ounce in weight. Elated by this providential discovery, which at first they could scarcely believe to be real, yet hesitating between a dread of the vigorous laws relating to diamonds and a hope of regaining their liberty, they consulted a clergyman, who advised them to trust to the mercy of the State, and accompanied them to Villa Rica, where he procured them access to the governor. They

threw themselves at his feet, and delivered to him the invaluable gem on which their hopes rested, relating all the circumstances connected with it. The Governor, astonished at its magnitude, could not trust the evidence of his senses, but called the officers of the establishment to decide whether it was a diamond, who set the matter beyond all doubt. Being thus by the most strange and unforeseen accident put in the possession of the largest diamond ever found in America, he thought proper to suspend the sentence of the men as a reward for their having delivered it to him. The gem was sent to Rio de Janeiro, from whence a frigate was despatched with it to Lisbon, whither the clergyman was also sent to make the proper representations respecting it. The sovereign confirmed the pardon of the delinquents, and bestowed some preferment on the holy father.

Another celebrated diamond is one in the possession of the Sultan of Matan, in the island of Borneo. This stone is also uncut and weighs 367 carats. So great is the value its owner attaches to it, and so keen his dread of being deprived of this symbol of royalty, that when strangers desire to see the gem they are shown only a model in crystal. On one occasion, at the beginning of the century, the Governor of Batavia offered in exchange for the diamond the sum of £31,000, two large ships with their full equipment, and a quantity of ammunition; but neither entreaties nor bribes would induce the rajah to part with it. The value of the stone has been estimated at £269,378.

The crown of Russia is at present presumably the richest in diamonds. Besides several valuable collections in the imperial Treasury there are three crowns entirely composed of these stones. That of Ivan Alexiowitch contains 881, that of Peter the Great 847, and that of Catharine II. 2536. One of its most remarkable diamonds is the 'Orloff,' now set in the top of the imperial sceptre, and on this account sometimes called the 'Sceptre' diamond. The history of this stone has been much mixed up with that of the 'Moon of the Mountain,' another great diamond in the possession of the Czar. The most authentic account appears to be that it formed one of the eyes of the Hindu god Sri-Ranga, to whom was dedicated a magnificent temple situated on a fortified island in Mysore. A French deserter from the Indian service, who had been at work in the neighbourhood of this temple, hearing of the idol's *beaux yeux*, determined to become their possessor. As no Christians were permitted within the precincts of the pagoda, he, in order to gain the confidence of the priests, became a devotee, and so ingratiated himself with the Brahmins that they confided to him the guardianship of the inner shrine, which contained the idol. Watching his opportunity, one stormy night he succeeded in forcing one of the eyes out of its socket, and

fled with it to Madras, where he sold the gem to an English sea-captain for £2000, who in turn disposed of it to a Jew for £12,000. From him it was purchased by Khojeh, a Persian merchant, who at Amsterdam, when on his way from England to Russia, met Prince Orloff. This prince, in order to regain the favour of Catharine II., under whose displeasure he had fallen, bought the gem from the merchant for the sum of £90,000 and an annuity of £4000, and presented it to his imperial mistress, who had previously declined the purchase as too costly, but now accepted this truly royal gift from her illustrious subject. The 'Orloff' diamond weighs 194 carats, and its estimated value is £369,800. In size it ranks first amongst European gems, and in beauty yields the palm to the 'Regent' only. It is said that Wilkie Collins's novel *The Moonstone* was suggested by this stone.

But unquestionably the 'Pitt,' or 'Regent,' as it was afterwards called, is the most perfect brilliant in existence, and its history is also very remarkable. It is said to have been found by a slave in the Partea mines in 1701, who, to retain his treasure, cut a hole in the calf of his leg, in which he concealed it, although it is more probable he secreted it among the bandages. The slave escaped to the coast with his 'find,' where he encountered an English skipper, whom he made his confidant, offering, indeed, to bestow upon him the stone in return for his liberty. The mariner, apparently consenting to the slave's proposal, took him out to sea, and when there drowned him after obtaining possession of the diamond. Disposing of the gem to a diamond merchant for £1000, it is said the man afterwards hanged himself in a fit of remorse. Mr Pitt, Governor of Fort St George, and great-grandfather of the illustrious William Pitt, became the next possessor of this valuable stone, weighing 410 carats, for £20,000. He sent it to London, where he had it very skilfully cut at a cost of £5000, the process occupying two years. Pitt appears to have found his diamond no very enviable possession, for, after refuting the calumnies of his enemies, who had charged him with having obtained it by unfair means, he was so haunted by the fear of being robbed that he never slept two nights consecutively under the same roof, never gave notice of his arrival in or departure from town, and went about mysteriously disguised. He must necessarily have felt greatly relieved when he parted with the diamond to the Duc d'Orleans, regent during the minority of Louis XV., king of France, in 1717, for the sum of £135,000.

With the money so obtained the ex-governor restored the fortunes of his ancient house. After this the 'Regent' became identified with the fortunes of France, and passed through many revolutions and literally through many hands, for, during the Reign of Terror it was carefully

chained and guarded by gendarmes, exposed to the public, and any poor half-starved creature might hold it for a few seconds. At the robbery of the Garde Mobile the 'Regent' was stolen, with the whole of the French regalia; but the hiding-place was revealed by one of the robbers, and it was found buried in the Allée des Veuves. Napoleon I. pledged it to the Dutch Government in order to raise money, of which he was greatly in need, and after its redemption appears to have worn it in the handle of his sword. Barbot tells us it was exhibited amongst the crown jewels at the Paris Exhibition of 1855, and he justly regards it as the most conspicuous gem in the now disused crown of France, which contains eight other diamonds and is by far the richest in the world. In the cutting the 'Regent' was reduced to 136½ carats, and was in 1791 declared to be worth £480,000.

It may here be mentioned that the Brazilian crown diamonds were valued at more than £4,000,000. One of the most important was estimated at £34,800, and adorns the handle of a cane. Brazil also produced the twenty diamonds which compose the twenty buttons of the doublet of ceremony of Joseph I., each valued at £5000.

The superb stone named the 'Star of the South' was found by a poor negress in 1853, who, according to the prevailing custom in Brazil, was granted her freedom as a reward and a pension for life. It was sold by her master for the ridiculously low sum of £3000. This diamond in the rough weighed 254½ carats, but was reduced in the cutting to 125. It became the property of a Parisian syndicate, who sold it to the late Gaikwar of Baroda. It will be remembered this prince was deposed for attempting to kill the British resident, Colonel Phayre, by means of diamond dust.

The 'Pigott' was formerly one of the famous diamonds. We say *was* advisedly for the stone is no longer in existence. It was nevertheless in Lord Pigott's possession when he quitted Madras to visit England in 1775. How he acquired the jewel is not known; but as he acknowledged to having received a few presents 'of a trifling value' from some of the native princes, there is but little doubt that this diamond was among the number. It could scarcely be termed a 'trifle,' as Mawe speaks of it as being worth £40,000; and it is known to have been bought by a young man for £30,000 in a public lottery in 1801, who afterwards resold it at a very low price. In the year 1818 it was in the hands of a firm of City jewellers, Messrs Rundle & Bridge, who eventually sold it to Ali Pasha. With him it met with a tragic end, and Mr R. W. Murray describes the incident as follows, after saying that its owner always wore it in a green silk purse attached to his girdle: 'When Ali Pasha was mortally wounded by Reshid Pasha he immediately retired to his

divan, and desired that his favourite wife, Vasilika, should be poisoned. He then gave the diamond to Captain D'Anglas, with an order that it should be crushed to powder in his presence, which was forthwith obeyed, and the beautiful gem utterly destroyed.' So perished one of the finest of historical diamonds.

The next diamond we will notice is the renowned 'Sancy,' which was bought at Constantinople in the year 1570 by a M. de Sanci, the French ambassador at the Porte, for a large sum. This gentleman appears to have been induced by Henry III. to lend him his diamond, ostensibly for the purpose of raising money upon it. But it does not appear as if Henry ever really parted with the jewel, for the Duc de Sully tells us that he wore, to conceal his baldness, a little turban on his head—his 'toque,' as it was called—which was ornamented in front with a very large diamond. It must afterwards have been returned to its original owner, for De Sanci is again credited with lending it to Henry IV. of Navarre, for the same purpose of raising money, and there is a most romantic story attached to its transmissions. The messenger who had been entrusted with the stone to convey it to the king disappeared, and some time elapsed before it was discovered he had been waylaid, murdered, and presumably robbed. M. de Sanci, who had entire confidence in his servant, and felt convinced he would not lightly give up his charge, caused the forest where the deed was committed to be searched; and the body being found and disembowelled, the diamond came to light, the faithful valet having swallowed it to prevent its falling into the hands of the thieves. Whether this story be true or not, there is a specially interesting document which shows that the stone must have been acquired by the Crown of England some time between the years 1590 and 1600. This is the *Inventory of the Jewels in the Tower of London*, March 22, 1605, in a passage of which the 'Mirror of Great Britain,' a famous crown-jewel, is thus described: 'A great and ryche jewell of golde, called the "Myrror of Greate Brytayne," conteyninge one verie fayre table-diamond, one verie fayre table-ruby, twoe other lardge diamondes, cut lozengewise, the one of them called the "Stone of the letter H of Scotland," garnysht with smalle diamondes, twoe rounde perles, fixed, and one *Faire Diamond, Cutt in Fawcettes; bought of Sauncey.*' The next mention of the diamond is its presentation by Queen Henrietta Maria, consort of Charles I., to the Earl of Worcester, in return for his valuable services to the House of Stuart; and later, that it was sold about the year 1695 by James II. to Louis XIV. for £25,000. It was lost to the French nation in the robbery of the Garde Mobile at the same time that the 'Regent' disappeared, in September 1792, but was afterwards discovered in the hands of the Monte de Piété,

or State pawning establishment. In 1865 it was purchased by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy of Bombay, but did not remain long in the East, for it was exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1867. It afterwards became the property of the Maharajah of Puttiala, upon whose turban it shone at the Grand Durbar held during the Prince of Wales's tour in India, and now belongs to Mr Astor, whose late wife generally wore it when she attended the Queen's Drawing-Room.

In this brief account of some of the world's most famous diamonds the 'Star of South Africa,' or Dudley diamond, must not be omitted, as its discovery is practically the history of the commencement of diamond-mining in South Africa. We will give the story in Mr Murray's words, taken from his papers in the *Society of Arts Journal*, March 18, 1881. In speaking of Albania—a portion of the Griqua territory—he says: 'One of the colonists who had helped to form the settlement was a Mr Van Niekirk. Mr O'Reilly, who was returning from the interior to Colesberg, called upon Van Niekirk, and remained with him for the night. In the course of the evening one of Van Niekirk's children, a little girl, was playing on the floor with some of the pretty pebbles which are common in the neighbourhood of the Vaal River. Mr O'Reilly's attention was directed to one of the stones which threw out a very strong light, to which Mr O'Reilly's eyes had been unaccustomed. He took it up from the floor and offered to buy it, asking what Van Niekirk would take for it. The simple-minded Boer could not understand what the meaning of purchasing a stone could be, and he said he would take no money for it, but that, if Mr O'Reilly had a mind to take it, he could have it.'

'The colonial trader is generally represented as an individual of a most designing and unscrupulous kind; but there are men amongst them whose fair dealing and high character would stand comparison with that of any men in the world, and no men have a better footing amongst the Boers than the old-established traders. Mr O'Reilly is one of them. He told Van Niekirk that he believed it to be a precious stone, and of value; he would, therefore, not take it for nothing. It was ultimately agreed between them that O'Reilly should take the stone, ascertain its value, and, if found to be a diamond, as O'Reilly suspected it was, that it should be sold, and the money divided between them. Mr O'Reilly took the stone to Colesberg, where he showed it, and he confidently stated to the people he met at the bar of the hotel that it was a diamond. He wrote his

initials on the window-pane and cut a tumbler with the stone, and was laughed at for his alleged foolishness, as many a discoverer had been before him. One of the company took the stone out of O'Reilly's hands and threw it into the street. It was a narrow chance that the stone was found again; and had it not been it is quite a question whether the diamond-fields of South Africa would yet or ever have been discovered in our day. However, the stone was found, and O'Reilly sent it to Grahamstown, to Dr Atherston, to be tested; and the Doctor and Bishop Richards, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Grahamstown (one of the most scientific men in South Africa), both pronounced it to be a diamond of twenty-two and a half carats. From Grahamstown the stone was sent to the then Colonial Secretary, the Honourable Richard Southey, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Griqualand West, who submitted the stone to the best authorities at hand, and they all decided it to be a diamond. It was then forwarded to the Queen's jewellers, Messrs Hunt & Roskell, who confirmed the decisions obtained in the colony, and valued the stone at £500. . . . This led to a great deal of excitement throughout the country. Small diamonds were brought in by the natives. Then flashed the startling intelligence through the country that a diamond of over eighty-three carats had been discovered. This turned out to be true, and this is how it came about. Mr Van Niekirk, from whom Mr O'Reilly obtained the first stone, hearing that it had turned out to be a diamond, remembered that he had seen one of a similar character in the possession of a native, and set out to find it. A Boer is not long in getting hold of a native when he wants him, and Van Niekirk soon had his man. The native had kept the stone, and Van Niekirk gave him nearly all he possessed for it—about five hundred sheep, horses, &c.; but, at whatever the price, he obtained the stone, and set off with it to Messrs Lillienfeld Brothers, of Hope Town, merchants of long standing in South Africa, and now represented in Hatton Garden. They purchased the stone for £11,200, and christened it the "Star of South Africa," forwarded it to England, and it ultimately became the property of the Countess of Dudley, who purchased it of Messrs Hunt & Roskell.' It was reduced in the cutting to forty-six and a half carats.

Many writers had suggested that in all probability diamonds would be discovered in South Africa; but it was not until March 1867 that the first Cape diamond was found; and since then the number of fine stones it has produced has been quite unexampled in the history of diamond-mining.



MEDICAL EXAMINATION FOR LIFE INSURANCE.



IT is an awesome business, examination for a life insurance office at the hands of its medical man. Most natures resent personalities. In a drawing-room, among one's own friends, it is embarrassing to be suddenly singled out—divided from the flock—while the self-constituted historian of the party narrates some joke against or some feat favourable to one's reputation. For or against is not the point; it is the isolation that irks.

Small wonder then that—formidable necessity—the medical examiner is often encountered with shrinking. With your wit or enterprise he has nothing to do—not he. You may be the most plausible person in the provinces, but on him your arts will be wasted.

With genial smile and sympathetic manner veiling his keen, cold intellect, he is going to size you up. He intends to find out what sort of people your ancestors were, what your relations are, and, most important of all, what you are yourself.

Like the man who goes round tapping the wheels of a newly arrived train, he is on the lookout for flaws.

'How's your liver?' asked Mr Cattermole of the Rev. Robert Spalding: you will have to answer a lot more questions before Æsculapius lets you go. Not only is he concerned with you then and there as you stand before him, but you must out with your past records, your status moral and social must be glanced over, the performances of your sires go into the balance, and everything has to be properly weighed in order to get a satisfactory answer to the question, 'What is your expectation of life?'

For you who read and I who write are really most complex people. We may inherit all sorts of inconvenient tendencies from our ancestors; and insurance companies are wide awake to the fact that the sins of the fathers are visited upon their children.

Before, then, the doctor focuses his specially developed faculty for research upon the actual person of the would-be policy-holder who has ventured into his sanctum, he concerns himself mainly with two questions which touch his client nearly—family history and personal history.

The usual questions asked under the head of family history relate to consumption, cancer, gout, rheumatism, and insanity. Of these consumption and cancer are the most important.

A history of consumption among one's ancestors must be always an unpleasant thing; but for life insurance purposes it presents varying degrees of significance. We need not go deeply into the question. It is obvious, however, that a man whose father and mother both suffered from con-

sumption would have to run a big risk before he made old bones. If only one of his parents was affected, the other being healthy, his chances of long life would be much greater. And so on. The changes may be rung in several ways. To take just one more instance, suppose that the candidate's mother had died of consumption, and all his brothers and sisters were dead also, then, *ceteris paribus*, his chance of long life would not be so good as that of a man whose mother only had so died, his brothers and sisters still being alive and in fair health.

The reason of this is not far to seek.

Presumably if two healthy people marry, their offspring will be healthy. The children of two delicate parents are most unlikely to be robust. But if a person of sound and robust constitution take unto himself or herself a delicate partner for life, then it remains for the offspring to show how far they for their part are biased in the direction of health or disease by the healthy or unhealthy parent. Healthy brothers and sisters argues that the nature of the strong parent dominates the children, and *vice versâ*.

But there is another element concerned in the calculation of the chances of a candidate with a phthisical family history. This is his age. Contrary to what one would naturally expect, the older he is (of course within limits) the more likely he is to be regarded favourably. Persons under thirty are eyed with suspicion. And for this reason, that consumption is a disease most fatal during the opening years of life. Of such importance is age, that suppose a man, forty, of good physique, with well-developed chest and a good past record, were to present himself for examination, even though both his parents and all his brothers and sisters had died of consumption, he would probably be accepted on his own merits. He would be regarded as an example of the survival of the fittest. And justly so, for the demon of hereditary taint occasionally has pity and lets a favoured few slip through his iron fingers.

A family history of cancer, on the other hand, acquires graver significance with every added year of life; and a candidate of fifty or over, two or more of whose family had died from this cause, would hardly find an enthusiastic reception in insurance circles.

Gout on both sides is a bad thing for the offspring. There can be no question that people suffering from hereditary gout are not really satisfactory lives. Before they are thirty-five the cloven hoof shows itself. They exhibit a general want of tone. Their lives are sluggish, or they catch cold easily, and having caught cold, shake it off with difficulty; their nervous systems may be impressionable, and they become easily overstrung

and easily depressed; or, again, they may suffer from various skin troubles.

But the yoke of hereditary gout is a light one compared with that of consumption or cancer.

Now suppose the happy candidate is able so far to plead not guilty, there still remain two minor items on the charge-sheet of hereditary iniquity. There are the 'breaking-down age' of the family, and its 'liability to catch disease.'

Some families, generation after generation, break down comparatively young. Up to a certain age no fault can be found with them. At fifty-five, maybe, they compare favourably with their contemporaries; but then in a year or two, with startling suddenness, they become worn out. Yet a little while and they die. It is a fine thing to come of a long-lived stock.

The second point is not so important. The fact remains, however, that in particular families there is manifested a remarkable readiness to catch infectious diseases.

In the case of the general public, especially in these days of sanitary law, this could hardly count. But should the applicant be a nurse or a medical man the point deserves notice.

So far we have dealt with those things over which the person himself under consideration has had no control. These are the qualities with which he was endowed from the beginning. Or if we may be allowed to adopt a time-honoured metaphor whereby we poor mortals are likened unto ships sailing over the waters of life, then the particular we who are writing have so far posed as cunning brokers. We have not trusted to outside appearances. A coat of paint hides nothing from our eyes. We required to know a number of things about the vessel we are appraising; and so far we have not done so badly. We have found out from what forests the timber came, be it oak or pine; we know who did the steel and iron work, and what firm put in the machinery. So far so good. If only the vessel has had fair usage we know within a very small margin what we are doing with our money. But has the vessel had fair usage?

That we must find out; and so in plain English we now come to consider the past record of the candidate himself.

How has he fared? Are his timbers threatened with the dry-rot of acquired consumption; has his delicate and originally beautifully adjusted machinery been crippled by gout or rheumatism; or, dread question, has his whole fabric ever, even for a moment, grounded upon the cruel reef of insanity?

Many diseases are unimportant in their nature and transient as to their effects. But these four, consumption, gout, rheumatism, and insanity, leave their mark.

Of course a candidate suffering from consumption at the time of medical examination would

necessarily be rejected. But suppose that in time past he had suffered from it—suppose, say ten years ago, he had lived through an attack of blood-spitting, cough, and loss of flesh, and that since then, for the last ten years, he had been in good health, and there were no active mischief now at the present moment discoverable, and the old damage done was small, then he might be accepted with an increased premium. If he were over thirty-five, age would be in his favour.

Gout has not until lately received the attention it deserves at the hands of insurance societies. Undoubtedly the degenerative tissue changes it threatens to the vital organs of the body handicap gravely the later years of life. A modern authority lays it down as a law, that one single attack of acute and undoubted gout, no matter how slight, should mean an additional three years to the premium.

The results of rheumatism are often disastrous. A German authority on diseases of the heart says that twenty-five per cent. of all cases of rheumatic fever come out of the struggle with a permanently disabled heart. But, granted one attack of acute rheumatism, the chances of another are at hand. If, therefore, a candidate has had one attack, though his heart came off scot-free, the probabilities of another attack are as a very dagger threatening that heart again.

For this reason one marked attack of rheumatic fever, laying the sufferer up for from two to three months, demands an addition of seven years at the age of thirty. With regard to insanity things are not yet so definitely arranged. In all probability a candidate who had once been insane would find it necessary to accept whatever terms any particular office might like to offer.

A recent history of asthma or epilepsy would in all probability lead to rejection; but if some years had elapsed since the last attack, and no mark had been left on the constitution, the life might be accepted with an addition.

But through all this weary list of uncomfortable possibilities our candidate stands firm. He has nothing to do with these things. His hereditary and personal records are without flaw. Then in all probability he is well built and of sound constitution.

Granted good timber went to the making of the ship; granted that she has so far voyaged scatheless, it is almost a foregone conclusion that we shall find her built on the right lines.

So it comes to this, that without even ever having seen any particular candidate, but with a faithful record of these two things—family and personal history—before him, the medical examiner can tell whether or not that candidate is likely to be a robust, well-built man.

For the guidance of examiners, authorities on the subject have fixed certain standards to which healthy candidates should conform.

The following table sets forth what should be the correct weight and chest measurement of a man aged thirty for any height in inches between five feet and six feet one inch :

Height.		Standard Weight.			Circumference of Chest—Medium.	
Ft.	In.	St.	Lb.	Lb.	In.	
5	0	8	0	= 112	33½	
5	1	8	4	= 116	34	
5	2	9	0	= 126	35	
5	3	9	7	= 133	35½	
5	4	9	13	= 139	36	
5	5	10	2	= 142	37	
5	6	10	5	= 145	37½	
5	7	10	8	= 148	38	
5	8	11	1	= 155	38½	
5	9	11	8	= 162	39	
5	10	12	1	= 169	39½	
5	11	12	6	= 174	40	
6	0	12	10	= 178	40½	
6	1	13	0	= 182	41	

The weight at any other age may be found with sufficient accuracy by adding or deducting three-fourths of a pound for each year according as the candidate is over or under thirty. It is considered allowable for a candidate to vary fifteen per cent. under or above the standard weight. An increase of even twenty to twenty-five per cent. does not seem to be of importance ; but very heavy people are liable to diseases of the heart, brain, and liver ; and, on the other hand, among very spare people the mortality from wasting diseases is high.

The chest should be of good shape, neither flat nor barrel-shaped ; and with a full inspiration it should expand from one and a half inch to two inches. The chest measurements given in the table are for a medium-sized chest. The tape should go under the shoulder-blades and over the breasts. Of course different types of constitution vary somewhat in build, and for this reason some slight latitude in chest girth may be allowed ; but a good chest should conform in size very nearly to the foregoing table.

As long as the abdomen does not exceed the chest in measurement it calls for no remark ; but a round stomach is anatomically weak.

We will suppose, then, that our candidate is thirty years old, stands five feet nine inches high, weighs eleven stone eight pounds, and is thirty-nine inches round the chest. He is, moreover, a man whose occupation is healthy, lives in the country, and is in easy circumstances. The very sight of him will rejoice the eyes of any medical examiner. Insurance companies will extend to him an exceedingly cordial welcome. And the reason is this : he will in all probability live to be an old man. His height alone is in his favour. Men of moderate height, from five feet six inches to five feet nine inches, are, as a class, more sturdy than their taller brethren. For great height means a long journey to the circulating blood and increased strain on the heart.

A man's occupation, too, is of much moment. Butchers, bakers, plumbers, and men engaged in the sale of alcoholic liquors show a high rate of mortality. On the other hand, clergymen, as a rule, live long lives.

We have endeavoured to show, in a cursory manner, the lines upon which a medical man goes when conducting his examination for medical insurance purposes. And from the above any one can get a rough idea of his chances of being accepted at an ordinary or increased premium.

In most cases, from the doctor's point of view, the point is quickly decided. But circumstances do arise which call for the most careful weighing of pros and cons.

At the risk of wearying our reader let us cite just one instance.

Suppose a candidate to have had a tuberculous history, but at the moment of, and for several years prior to, the examination he has been in fairly good health ; suppose, in short, that in the physician's mind he hovers on the borderland between acceptance at an increased premium and rejection at any price. Then items coming under the head of environment will, in all probability, decide his fate.

Is he married ? What are his means ? What is his occupation ?

Marriage, easy circumstances, and a healthy occupation are favourable to long life. If the doubtful candidate were a farmer and comfortably off, he would run less risk of rejection than if he were a clerk or baker.

In conclusion we wish to express a hope that those of our readers who retire forthwith to their bedrooms in the company of a measuring-tape will find, on reference to the table given above, that their chests come up to the required standard. For this alone is wonderfully reassuring.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

THE Old Year goes away : her eyes are sad—

The eyes of one who hopes or fears no more.

Snow is upon her hair ; gray mists have clad

A form the vesture of the spring which wore.

The new buds quicken now beneath the clay ;

But not for her—the Old Year goes away.

The New Year enters in : a happy child,

Who looks for flowers to fill her outstretched hand,
And knows not fear although the winds be wild.

Soon shall the birds be singing in the land,

On the young leaves the patter of soft rain,

And violets ope—the New Year comes again.

So with this mortal life : now young, now old,

A spring which never dreams of frost and snow,
Summer and autumn—then the tale is told ;

With tired step, in wintry days we go.

God grant a waking on some happier shore,

Where the lost youth and joy come back once more !

MARY GORGES.

ment.
d in
e of
as a

esory
man
dical
any
s of
eased

view,
ances
thing

cite

alous
veral
n in
the
land
and
nder
ility,

What

althy
the
tably
n if

that
their
-tape
bove,
lard.

v.

band,

w,

re !